

LANDRU, MASTER-KILLER OF FRANCE, HEMMED IN BY DETECTIVES, WARILY ESCAPES TO END LIFE OF ANOTHER CREDULOUS VICTIM

REMAINS OF ANDREE BURNED IN FURNACE OF GLASS FACTORY

Openly Accused By Young Girl He Seduced, Landru Sends Bullet Into Her Heart, and Then in Dead of Night Carries Her Body to Glowing Coals of Banked Furnace.

By WILLIAM LE QUEUX,

Famous Criminologist and Author of "The Fifth Finger," "The Four Faces," "Tracked By Wireless," etc.

LANDRU'S early life is described by Mr. Le Queux in the opening chapter of his story of the world's greatest love criminal. After years of petty swindling, Landru turned his attention to victimizing women, making love to them, getting control of their property and then killing them. Mme. Cuchet was one of the first. Landru poisoned her and her son, Andre, in a villa rented with her money, set up a furnace and burned their bodies. He then turned his attention to luring other women to gruesome deaths by assuring them of his overwhelming devotion.

When the police investigated his activities at the villa he shrewdly allayed their suspicions. He then made love to Nina Langlois, got her to sign over her money and threw her body into a river. A Widow Nadaud next fell into his net. He planned a cruel death for her, but she recovered from the effects of poisoned grapes, while her friend died.

At the conclusion of last week's installment, Landru had just found Andree Babelay, a slip of a girl, who had left her parents, friendless and penniless in the Paris subway. He approached her, took her to his apartment and a few days later, after he had promised to marry her, had taken her to his villa to recuperate from a recent sickness. There the girl improved in health and was extremely happy with her life in the country, constantly thinking, of course, of Lucien's promise to wed. All the time Lucien, or Landru, was secretly planning the death of the credulous girl.

EACH day he would refer to their coming honeymoon, promising to take her to the Italian lakes.

"Business keeps me in Paris till May, my dear one," he said one day. "In the first week of May we will be wed, and then I shall be free to go to Italy for two months."

"Oh, that will be lovely!" declared the girl. "I shall not write to mother until we are married. She, no doubt, is wondering what has become of me."

"I asked you not to write, and I am glad you have kept your promise. Write to nobody until we are married," Landru said. "You never told anybody where I live in the Rue de Mauberge, did you?"

"You asked me not to tell anybody, Lulu, and I have not done so," replied the girl meekly, whereat the assassin was satisfied. In view of Monsieur Friedmann's extremely hostile attitude, and the active search of the police, he did not welcome inquiries from anybody. He could alter his dress, but his facial expression he was unable to disguise, though he had, since his narrow escape, taken to wearing, when out of doors, glasses with heavy rims, so as to conceal the unusual hollowness of his eyes.

Taken With Andree

He was rather taken with little Andree. She was so affectionate and innocent, and of such a sweet disposition, even though she had been only a servant to a fortune-teller. She possessed an air of refinement, and with amusement he noticed how completely he had fascinated her, until she performed the housework, did the cooking, and seemed as faithful as a dog.

This love romance might have continued for a considerable time. No doubt it would have done. Probably poor little Andree would have escaped the fatal embrace of that ogre in human form were it not for an incident which occurred about a fortnight after her arrival at the House of Death.

One afternoon Landru had driven her in the car to Dreux, where they made some purchases at grocery and at other shops. At a stationer's, while Landru had gone to buy some tobacco, the girl bought a magazine and a copy of the newspaper Bon Soir.

After dinner that evening, while her lover was writing a letter to

MORE LANDRU

ANOTHER installment of this remarkable story of the Loves of Landru will be published in the Washington Sunday Times next week.

FRENCH ARCH-ASSASSIN ON WAY TO HIS TRIAL



Landru, the Assassin of Women, on His Way to Court at the Time of His Trial. His Assumed Air of Innocence Was One of His Strongest Cards.

that he was actually the man of whom the police were in such active search. "You have lied to me, Lulu!" she went on, in a hard voice. "You did live in Vernouillet—and you are Raymond Diard!" she cried, staring at him in wild-eyed horror.

"You silly little fool!" cried Landru angrily. "What are you saying?"

"The truth!" she went on, now full of defiance and hatred. "You are the man, Diard, who escaped arrest, as the paper says. I now see why you are so careful not to go to railway stations, and wear your spectacles, and change your clothes and hat whenever you go out. I know why, on that night at the Rue de Mauberge, you did not return to me. It was the night of your escape from the police in the Montmartre," she went on, glaring at him fiercely as she spoke. "You have deceived me, Monsieur Diard! But you will do so no longer. I—I—"

"And pray what will you do?" he interrupted in a low, deep voice.

Ran for Coat

"I shall tell them that Raymond Diard and Lucien Guillet are one and the same!" cried the young girl in defiance. "I will not remain here another moment with an assassin!" she declared, dashing from the room and upstairs to obtain her hat and coat.

"Come back!" he commanded, but she sprang up the stairs, while he waited in the hall below, hoping to calm her. In any case he saw himself in considerable peril, for a word to the police, and he would, no doubt, be entrapped. He had acted with foolish indiscretion, and had inadvertently revealed to her several facts concerning himself which the police would, no doubt, welcome.

A few moments later she descended the stairs into the tiled hall, and as she did so, he gripped her roughly by the shoulder, saying:

"I shall not let you leave this house until we have arrived at a complete understanding." And he shook her roughly. "What you are saying is all lies, and your actions, my dear Andree, are sheer madness. Is every man with a dark beard and deep-set eyes to be arrested as the scoundrel Diard? Is this the recompense I have for taking compassion upon you, and afterward falling in love with you and asking you to become my wife?"

"You told the same story to the widow Cuchet," was her reply. "I know that you are Raymond Diard."

"And how do you know, pray?" asked the arch-assassin.

"Because last Sunday, when you drove into Houdan, I happened to have the curiosity to open that big brown English suit case of yours, and in it I saw a quantity of papers. Among them was a letter evidently written by a boy—and it bears the signature 'Andre Cuchet!'"

"Bah! You are full of weird imaginings," Landru cried, his crafty brain trying to arrive at some solution of the perilous situation, and much surprised that the girl should have opened the suit case which he believed had been securely locked. "Think of what you are saying, my dear Andree."

"You Love Me Not"

"I am your dear Andree no longer!" cried the girl defiantly, her love having turned to loathing. "You are alleged by the police to be an assassin, and you must clear yourself before I see you again," was her reply.

"So you intend to go to the police—eh?"

"I do. It is my duty."

"Then you love me no more—eh?" he asked with pitiful appeal, well feigned.

"No. You have deceived me," she declared.

Then he laughed grimly in her face.

"And so have you! So, take that!"

And before she was aware of the fact that he had drawn his Browning pistol, he fired point-blank at her, and the bullet pierced her chest.

The poor, disillusioned girl, horrified at her discovery, staggered and fell backward dead, without uttering a word.

And Landru only laughed as she lay there huddled and inert, and remarked:

"That is your punishment for prying into my affairs."

Then, turning away and leaving her where she had fallen upon the tiles, which could easily be washed, he muttered to himself:

"Well! She grew rather too affectionate, so tonight is just the same as a week later. The little vixen might have brought upon me serious trouble if she had kept her own counsel and her mouth closed. It is, indeed, fortunate that she was so outspoken!"

He returned to the dining room, where he poured out a stiff glass of cognac—for he only drank to strengthen his nerves—swallowed it, and afterward tossed away the spent cartridge into the garden, where, three years afterward, it was found dug into a flower bed among some standard roses.

Locked the House

Then he swallowed a second glass of cognac, and then, leaving the body of the poor girl where it had fallen, he extinguished the lamps, and locking up the house, got into his car and sped away towards Paris, upon a journey which was to prove more adventurous than ever he had anticipated.

Secrets of Gambais.

Landru driving as hard as he could, and wrapped to the eyes in his heavy motor-coat, which hid his beard, and, wearing goggles, entered Paris by the Porte Maillot soon after eleven o'clock that night.

The policeman in uniform was unobservant, for owing to air-raids the lights were dim at the city

gate, and no lights showed in the streets, while, on his approach through Neuilly, he had shut off the head lights of his car. Along the unlighted Avenue and through the Champs Elysee he sped, and across the city to the stuffy, ill-furnished abode of his friend old Caillaud.

"Ah! my dear Jules!" he cried cheerfully as the old man opened the door of the apartment, rather reluctantly at that hour, he said.

"You, my dear friend!" gasped the unscrupulous old fellow. "Why, I thought you were safely out of Paris. It is surely most dangerous for you to remain here!"

"I have been away at my villa in the country, and have only this moment returned," Landru replied.

"Then get away again—at once," urged the old man, without inviting him to be seated. "Gaffiot is still searching everywhere for you. He was here only yesterday, questioning me again, for he evidently suspects that we are often in communication. My letters are all opened, I find. Therefore, don't delay a single instant. Get away!"

"You do not anticipate that observation is being kept upon this place?" asked Landru eagerly.

"How can I tell? If the charge made against you is correct, then it is quite possible. Is it true?"

Landru hesitated for a second.

"Yes, mon vieux. The fact is that a woman was troubling me, and—well—in a fit of anger I gave her her conge!"

Jules Is Heartless

"Ah! you are not alone in that, my dear friend," laughed old Jules.

"When a woman unduly worries a man he is sometimes compelled to be firm. I have known other cases." And the old criminal simply regarded the confession as a matter of everyday occurrence. So long as he made profit upon his purchases he cared nothing as to how the seller came by the goods.

It was not for him to ask questions. He dealt daily with stolen property of all sorts—bonds, plate, jewels, and other valuables—for he had a subterranean sale for them in a dozen different quarters, and also means of smuggling the booty out of France. Much of the stolen jewelry went to London and to Brussels, while he himself had a crucible in his cellar where he could melt down plate and render it unrecognizable.

"What does Gaffiot allege?" asked Landru, standing thoughtfully and gazing round the close-smelling little room, filled with smoke of vile tobacco.

"That you killed a Madame Cuchet and her son Andre at a villa at Vernouillet," was the old fellow's reply. "He declares you are in Paris, and has been told a great deal concerning you by a certain Monsieur Friedmann. Do you know him?"

Landru bit his lip.

"What else?" he asked, ignoring the old dealer's question.

"A woman named Lombard. Line is also reported missing, and he is suspicious that you"

know something about her?" was the reply.

Landru at once saw that the police had spread their net, and that to remain in Paris at the moment was distinctly dangerous. Besides, he had left his car at the corner of the street. What if the house was being watched, as it well might be if Gaffiot entertained any suspicion that he was an occasional visitor there?

"How did Gaffiot know that we were friends?"

Leave Paris Now

"Ah! that I cannot tell," replied the old scoundrel, shrugging his shoulders. "I declared that I only knew you from seeing you sometimes at the Souffier, but evidently he has gained other information, and he has now become unpleasantly inquisitive. So my advice to you is to leave Paris, and stay away."

"Yes," growled the man who practiced murder as a trade. "I suppose I ought to take your advice."

"Do!" urged the old man. "Get away now, at once, and do not write to me. Come back in a few months, when it will be safe."

The men shook hands, and Landru, going out into the dark street, glanced suspiciously up and down, his hand upon his automatic pistol, wondering if any police agent was lurking in the vicinity.

He reached his car, standing in the darkness, but to his dismay found it impossible to start. His knowledge of motor mechanics instantly aroused his suspicions that it had been tampered with in his absence! Had the detective, keeping surveillance upon old Jules, in case he visited him, put the car out of order while he slipped away to report?

He tried again to start the car, but failed. He felt instinctively that his suspicions were correct.

Only a second sufficed for him to decide. He realized his peril. With assistance, the secret agent would return and await his coming, or perhaps hope to find him there endeavoring to start the car.

Abandons the Car

The risk was too great, so without another instant's hesitation he abandoned the car, and turning the corner, walked on. As he did so, he heard footsteps approaching along the dark street.

The detective was, no doubt, there with his friends, eager for his capture. But so elusive was he, and ready for any emergency, that he simply smiled within himself, and continued his way on foot through half a dozen narrow streets which he knew led down to the Boulevard.

His motor coat was heavy, therefore, realizing that he had a walk of several miles before him, and that a motorist in an overcoat might be noted by the police on duty in the streets if the news of his escape were circulated over Paris by telephone, he took off the coat and flung it into a dark entry as he passed along.

MADAME BUISSON DRUGGED AND THEN BURIED IN FOREST

For Ten Dollars Landru Made Love to Widow and Served Her Poisoned Coffee, Carefully Covering His Trail as He Dodged Police Throughout France—Nerve Never Failed.

Then, lighter and more free, he set his face westward, his intimate knowledge of Paris serving him in good stead.

It was 3 o'clock in the morning ere at last, very weary, he arrived on foot at his garage at Neuilly, where in the loft above reposed those strange souvenirs of his dead victims. He unlocked the place with his key, and within half an hour he had got out another car, belonging to a client who was away at the war—an open four-seater painted dark grey.

And in this he left Paris, and passing through Montrouge, struck due south for thirty miles or so till he arrived in the early grey dawn at Etampes. At the Hotel Grand Courrier he put the car into the garage, and gave his name as Henri Robert.

Luck of Satan

The luck of Satan pursued him. Had he remained a few moments longer with old Jules, he would, no doubt, have been captured. Just as he had suspected, the detective had put his car out of action, hoping on his return to find him trying to re-start it.

He slept soundly till nearly ten o'clock. Then, rising, he strolled through the crooked streets of the ancient little town of water-mills, spires, and turrets, purchased a cheap motor-coat at a ready-made tailor's, and then idled about looking at the several interesting churches and the ancient house of Anne de Piseleu, the favourite of Francois I., now a grocer's shop.

Till evening fell he remained in Etampes, and then he ate an early dinner, paid his bill, and drove by way of Rambouillet back to Gambais, feeling that at least he had another fortunate, if narrow, escape.

It was dark when he unlocked the door of the villa, and there in full view the huddled body of Andree Babelay lay stiff and cold in the fading winter light. He had placed the car in the garage, and to reach the dining-room he had to step over the body of the trustful girl who had, by mere chance, discovered his terrible secret.

Though hunted by the police and warned by his bosom friend, Jules, Landru never lost his head. His nature was cold, callous, and calculating. Even the sight of the body of the girl whose life he had taken without scruple aroused within him neither horror nor emotion.

Flowers Are Faded

He drank a glass of wine from the sideboard, and glanced around the cold, neglected room which the dead girl had, during the short time of her happiness when she had been mistress of the house, kept so spick-and-span with flowers he had brought from Madame Dubois, the florist, in Houdan.

These flowers—with which the assassin had pretended to be delighted—were fading, and the girl whose hands had arranged them lay dead where she had fallen under Landru's bullet.

By the activity of the Paris police "Bluebeard" was undoubtedly harassed. He saw that for the present he must not re-enter Paris. Indeed, he had only escaped by an ace, and was now away with no trace left behind. The Surete never connected Raymond Diard, the adventurer, with Henri Landru, the garage proprietor at Neuilly. And, as far as they could see, they never would.

The police of the Seine-et-Oise had, of course, blundered badly. He knew it, and laughed at them. It is the same in every country. The provincial police, owing to petty jealousies, always hesitate to request the aid of their more expert colleagues of the capital. And to that blunder Landru certainly owed his present liberty.

After half an hour the arch assassin braced himself for the grim work which he felt must now be carried out. Therefore, he dragged the body of poor little Andree downstairs to the cellar, where he divested it of all clothing, and carrying the bundle upstairs to the kitchen he burnt the clothes in the large square stove.

With his mania for collecting souvenirs of his victims, he kept her little patent-leather house

shoes, and also some letters he found in her pocket. But among the remains of the burnt clothing he found some hooks and buttons, and these he wrapped carefully in a piece of newspaper, to be disposed of in due course, he being always scrupulously certain to leave nothing behind to show any trace of the clothing he destroyed.

True, when later on I assisted the Paris police in digging up the garden of "The Hermitage," we found several hairpins, buttons and hooks, but they had in all probability been cast aside by previous tenants. Landru was too clever a criminal to leave any trace of his victims save those souvenirs and identity papers which he treasured so jealously, and those tell-tale entries in his little Black Book.

Stretching the body upon a bed of newspapers, he treated the head and hands as he had done those of Madame Colomb, his previous victim, and then, by the light of two flickering candles, he placed the remains in two sacks, and carried them upstairs to the garage, where he placed them in the car.

Just before midnight he drove out the car, with its grim burden, and set forth upon the long, open road to Maulette. He knew that if he took the road into Gambais it might be remarked that he was out upon some mysterious errand, but at the hamlet of Maulette all would be asleep. Hence he took a circuitous route, and passing along an unfrequented road to Boutigny, at last reached a little place called Verky, having driven about seventy kilometers. No one was astray as he passed through the little cluster of one-storied peasants' houses, and continuing his way, he presently turned up a by-road, deep with ruts, where, in the pale light—for the moon was hidden by a bank of cloud—stood a long, low factory building, from the tall chimney of which black smoke was rising.

Saw Glass Furnace

Now Landru was ever open to find fresh means for the disposal of the bodies of his victims. One day, a month before, while exploring the countryside, he had come across these works where glass was being made, and the two roaring furnaces struck him as an easy means by which to efface the evidence of his crimes.

He had found several men at work at the furnaces, and with a wandering Parisian's inquisitiveness, he sought some details concerning the work and the great heat generated. What the workmen said interested him deeply, and the more so when they told him their hours of work, inadvertently remarking that the furnaces were banked up and the place left unattended at night.

Therefore, descending from the car, he made a tour of the place, and afterward shouted in order to see if anyone were about. But, finding himself alone, he quickly removed the sacks from the car, and carrying them to the doors of the great furnaces, he opened one of them with a heavy iron bar he had seen the men use.

The heat emitted was terrific, the flames causing him to spring back. Within, it seemed almost white hot, so great was the draught.

Then, taking the heavy sacks, he, with a great effort, flung both of them in. Afterward he took up a long fire-rake, and with it pushed them deeper into the furnace, and closed the door.

Two minutes later he had returned to the car, and was on his way back to the House of Death.

Next morning he cleaned up the cellar, burned the papers and some of the old sacking, and cleaned the house.

Afterward, not daring to go near Paris, he wrote to his wife, saying that he had been detained in the country upon some urgent and profitable business, and that he was about to go to Bayonne—in the south—and might not be back home for a month.

Instead, he drove north to Beauvais, which is about fifty miles from Paris, and having put up at the old-fashioned Hotel de France et d'Angleterre, he wrote to Madame Buisson. Of money he had sufficient to last a few weeks; therefore, he felt that he must

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